Datums.com
Derivatives Ai Translations of Uploaded Multimedia Sources

Venezuela: The Revival of Regime Change By William D. Hartung

The Escalation of Military Intervention

The recent shift toward armed regime change in Venezuela by the Trump administration follows a predictable pattern of military escalation. For over three months, a significant U.S. naval buildup in the Caribbean accompanied attacks on Venezuelan vessels based on unsubstantiated claims of drug trafficking. These strikes resulted in the deaths of 115 people by late 2025. This campaign has since expanded to include the interception of oil tankers in the North Atlantic and covert operations conducted within Venezuela.

Most recently, the U.S. launched multiple airstrikes that killed at least 40 Venezuelans and resulted in the capture of President Nicholas Maduro and his wife. Both are currently held in New York City, awaiting criminal trials for narco-terrorism, cocaine importation conspiracies, and weapons charges. President Trump has publicly stated that the United States could manage Venezuela for years, though no specific strategy for such an occupation has been provided.

Historical Context and the Donroe Doctrine

The revival of military interventionism in Latin America signals a departure from recent foreign policy trends and raises concerns regarding the historical failure of such efforts. This administration employs a hyper-militarized interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine, now termed the **Donroe Doctrine**, which suggests a desire to return to 1850s-style territorial control.

This approach mirrors the early twentieth-century corollary established by Teddy Roosevelt, which asserted that the United States could exercise international police power to intervene in the Western Hemisphere. Historically, the U.S. intervened to change governments in Latin America and the Caribbean 41 times between 1898 and 1994, with 17 of those instances involving direct military action. The current administration appears to be reprising these past policies at an accelerated pace.

The Failure and Cost of Regime Change

While officials may celebrate the removal of Maduro, history suggests that the conflict is far from over. The 1991 Gulf War initially spurred celebratory rhetoric about American dominance, yet it led to a 20-year war of occupation in Iraq that ended in disaster. Similar wishful thinking preceded the 2003 invasion of Iraq, which was predicted to cost $50 to $100 billion but ultimately exceeded $1 trillion. This conflict resulted in hundreds of thousands of civilian deaths and left many U.S. military personnel with permanent injuries or psychological trauma.

The **opportunity costs** of these post-9/11 wars are staggering, with taxpayer obligations exceeding $8 trillion. This capital could have been used to:

1. Decarbonize the entire U.S. electrical grid.
2. Forgive all U.S. student loan debt.
3. Triple investments in green energy.

Continuing to pursue regional dominance through force guarantees a high price for both the targeted nations and Americans who require investments in health, housing, and education.

True Motivations: Oil and Power

The initial justification for the Venezuelan intervention—drug interdiction—does not withstand scrutiny, as Venezuela is not a primary source of fentanyl or other major narcotics entering the U.S.. President Trump later confirmed that the primary objective was the seizure and development of Venezuela's oil resources for the benefit of American oil companies.

However, this goal faces significant **economic and geological realities**. Venezuela's oil consists primarily of heavy crude, which is difficult to extract, and the country's infrastructure has been decimated by years of sanctions and neglect. Experts suggest it would require tens of billions of dollars and several years to restore production to previous levels. Beyond oil, the intervention serves to satisfy a personal will to power, weakens the Cuban government by denying it oil, and warns other progressive Latin American governments to comply with U.S. demands.

A Strategy for Restraint and National Strength

The Venezuelan intervention is seen as a sign that aggressive rhetoric and bullying policies are accelerating the decline of American global power. History demonstrates that U.S. dominance is often overrated, as seen in the inability to impose its will in Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq.

Instead of continuing an addiction to war, the source advocates for a **policy of restraint** and a shift toward smart diplomacy. True national strength is built on a healthy, well-educated, and unified population. A smaller military budget would free up resources to address urgent domestic and global needs, such as:

1. Combating climate change.
2. Preventing future pandemics.
3. Reducing poverty and inequality.

A less militarized approach to foreign engagement is presented as the only viable path out of the current geopolitical predicament.

thank you for listening to another session of the NoteBookLM.news series. You can find the full archive of all my podcasts at NotebookLM.news